

**Remarks**

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the specification and claims have obviated the objections by the Examiner, which should therefore be withdrawn.

Applicants have amended the specification to correct the misspelling of the word “polarization.” The amendment is clerical, and as such, it does not introduce new matter. Accordingly, the entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended Claim 1 to clarify the antecedent for the “area of illumination” as the area provided by the beam of line 5 of the claim; the amendment is clerical and, as such, does not introduce new matter. Claim 1 is further amended to clarify that the “same order” limitation (previously presented at lines 7-8 of Claim 1) is the “order of said feature size,” the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 2. Claim 1 is still further amended to change “illuminating radiation” to “illuminating source,” the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 4. Claim 1 is still further amended to remove references to a non-existing antecedent for a “light beam”; the amendment is clerical, and as such, does not introduce new matter. Claim 1 is still further amended to remove reference to a non-defined endpoint and replace it with an endpoint as selected by the practitioner of the claimed invention; the amendment is clerical, and as such, does not introduce new matter.

Applicants have amended Claim 3 to change reference to a “desired article” to an “article being processed,” the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 16 (as currently presented).

Applicants have amended Claim 9 to change “oscillation information” to “oscillation,” the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 18 (as currently presented). Claim 9 is further amended to delete the indefinite term “predicted” and replace it with “previously obtained,” the basis for which can be found in the specification on page 13, line 22 through page 14, line 3.

Applicants have amended Claim 10 to remove references to non-existing antecedents for “process critical features” and “optical features.” Claim 10 is further amended to change “design of the features” to “dimensions of said features” referring to “process critical features” recited in line 2 of Claim 10. Claim 10 is still further amended to clarify “arrangement with other features in the three dimensions” by replacing with “three dimensional arrangement with other features in

the article being processed.” Claim 10 is still further amended to clarify the antecedent basis of “materials.” These amendments are clerical and, as such, do not introduce new matter.

Applicants have amended Claim 11 to clarify reference to the “behavior of the illuminating radiation” as the “illuminating source” and to remove reference to a non-existing antecedent for “interference”. The amendments are clerical and, as such, do not introduce new matter.

Applicants have amended Claim 13 to clarify illumination “means” as the illumination “source”, the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 4.

Applicants have amended Claim 14 to clarify that the “material being examined” is the “article undergoing processing”, the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 7 (as currently presented).

Applicants have amended Claim 15 to clarify that the “detected signals” are the “detected oscillations”, the basis for which can be found in Claim 1, line 15 (as currently presented).

Applicants have amended Claim 16 to clarify that the “etch feature” is the “feature” referenced earlier in the same claim. The amendment is clerical and, as such, does not introduce new matter.

Applicants have amended Claim 17 to clarify that the “spectrally narrow” illumination source is the illumination source of Claim 1, line 4. This amendment is clerical and does not introduce new matter.

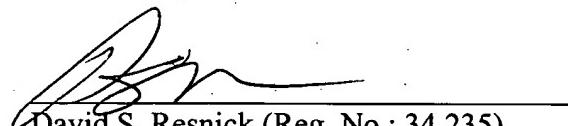
Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner’s indication that the claims would be allowable if the objections were overcome. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the claims have obviated the objections and that the claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

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In the event that any additional fees are required, the PTO is authorized to charge our deposit account No. 50-0850.

Respectfully submitted,

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